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Letter dated 9 February 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

My delegation wishes to acknowledge the late receipt of the letter of the President of the Security Council dated 25 January 2007 concerning the work of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1612 (2005). The letter was received late because the Mission of the Republic of Rwanda actually had to approach the Council secretariat for it on 7 February 2007 after learning of its existence from third parties. With regard to the letter itself, I wish to place on record my Government's disapproval of both the procedure and the contents thereof.

(1) With regard to procedure, I wish to recall that in the debate on the reform of the United Nations system, my Government has always called for greater transparency in the methods of work of the Security Council, which would require greater involvement of the relevant States. Following the consultations that led to the decision to send this letter to my delegation, we conclude that:

The Working Group deliberately chose, for obscure and malicious reasons that the Council should endeavour to shed light on, not to respect the requirement for transparency. The Chairman of the Working Group should have had the courtesy of first informing the Rwandan delegation and then discussing this matter with it before proposing the sending of such a baseless letter, which was drafted solely for the purpose of giving the impression that Rwanda has something to do with the current conflict situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Security Council has endorsed an initiative that is unfair to my Government. While the Working Group chose to deliberately keep my Government in the dark, we would have expected the Council to take a more transparent approach in order to avoid falling into the trap of being possibly manipulated by the Working Group for political reasons. I would like to inform the Council that the initiative for this letter stems from the desire to settle scores and the relentless pressure that France, author of the draft letter, Chairman of the Working Group and permanent member of the Security Council, has been subjecting my country to for over a decade.

(2) With regard to substance, my Government would like to inform the Council that the letter's contents are baseless. The letter offers nothing in terms of

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all the solutions proposed. On the contrary, its backward nature only creates confusion.

Since the situation of children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo falls under that country's domestic policy, it is that country's Government that must address it.

The question of General Nkunda is also a matter that falls under the domestic remit of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Moreover, it is not true, as the letter of the Council President would have us believe, that Nkunda moves into and out of Rwanda from his country at will. That is completely inaccurate. The Democratic Republic of the Congo's border with Rwanda is monitored by the joint forces of the Congolese army and one of the best United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) brigades, the Indian brigade. Ultimately, it is to these forces that the underhanded demand made of Rwanda should have been directed. The constant need to look for a scapegoat can only lead to faulty analyses and superficial solutions, and therefore to the perpetuation of the problems. Rwanda has no child soldiers in its army and cannot in any way support such a practice.

My delegation requests that this letter should be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Joseph **Nsengimana**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative